An-Nisaa'

LAJNA IMĀILLĀH CANADA

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A magazine for the moral and spiritual training of Lajna Imāillāh Canada.

There are four conditions for the acceptance of prayers:

- Righteousness
- Anguish of the heart
- Availability of a pure moment
- Pray for a long enough period

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, page 536)

In the Name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the ever Merciful!

Lajna Imāillāh Canada's

An-Nisaa'

Volume: 33 Issue: 2 & 3
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From the Holy Qur'ān

أَمَّن يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ
الْأَرْضِ ۗ أَإِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

Or, Who answers the distressed person when he calls upon Him, and removes the evil, and makes you Successors in the earth? Is there a god besides Allāh? Little is it that you reflect. (27:63)

The English translation of the Arabic verses is rendered by Maulvi Sher Ali Sāhib[ra].

Hadīth: Saying of the Holy Prophet[sa]

Love of the Lord

Hazrat Abu Hurairah[ra] narrates that the Holy Prophet[sa], conveyed that Allāh the Almighty says:

> "I treat My servant in accordance with his understanding of Me. I am with him whenever he remembers Me.' Allāh is more pleased with the repentance of a servant of His than one of you would be if he were to lose his camel in a barren desert and then find it unexpectedly. Allāh says: 'Whoever moves towards Me by the span of an open hand, I move towards him by half an arm's length. And whoever moves towards Me by half an arm's length, I move towards him by the length of an arm. When he comes walking towards Me, I run to meet him." (Muslim)

Selected Sayings of the Holy Prophet[sa], Hadīth#14, pg. 11, https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Selected-Sayings-of-Holy-Prophet.pdf

A Note from the Editor

And when My servants ask thee about Me, say: I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So they should hearken to Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way. (2:187)

In the above verse, Allāh the Almighty has addressd us as 'His servants'. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa], in his Friday Sermon of October 18, 2013, said regarding the above-mentioned verse:

"...those who are God's servants or seek to be God's servants do not have any wish/preference of their own because they prefer and wish for what pleases God. This has been further elaborated in Sūrah Al-Baqarah, verse 187….The Promised Messiah[as] has explained the word *Ebaadi* (My servants) as: '**Those people who believe in Allāh the Exalted and the Holy Prophet[sa].**' These are the people who are *Ebaadi* and are thus close to God and those who do not believe are distant from God. God states that in order to become His true servant His commandment should be obeyed. This would bring good and prayers would be accepted. When God states that His servants should say what pleases God, it definitely demands enhancement of faith and requires one to bring one's word and deed in congruity. One cannot practice contrary to what God commands but advise others to follow God and His Messenger. God has called discrepancy in word and deed a sin and states: '**O ye who believe! why do you say what you do not do? Most hateful it is in the sight of Allāh that you say what you do not do.'** (61: 3 – 4) Therefore discrepancy in word and deed is greatly disliked by God, in fact it is a sin. Claim to have faith and duplicity cannot go together." (Friday Sermon, October 18, 2013)

May Allāh enable us all to become of those who truly become His servants; try to attain His pleasure; and give their faith importance over worldly matters.

In the current issue of An-Nisaa', articles on various topics and issues have been included, such as "Acceptance of Prayers", "Gender Equality in Islām", "Purpose of Hijāb", "Importance of Financial Sacrifices", "Loyalty to One's Nation" and many more.

Please continue to write for An-Nisaa' and remember all those who contributed for the success of this magazine in your prayers. Jazak'Allāh!

Sadqia Hifsa

Spiritual Treasures from the Writings of the Promised Messiah[as]

The following excerpts are taken from The Essence of Islām: Volume I, pg. 93-97; 99-100; 136-137 (available online at www.alislam.org/books); a compilation of extracts from the writings, speeches, announcements and discourses of the Promised Messiah[as], translated into English by Hazrat Chaudhry Muhammad Zafrulla Khan[ra] and revised by Munawar Ahmad Sa`eed .

Almighty Allāh's Attributes of Beneficence

Divine qualities of beneficence are many, of which four are basic. In their natural order, the first one is that which is described in Sūrah Fatihah as *Rabb-ul-'Alamin*. This means that the *Rububiyyat* of God Almighty, that is to say, the creation and carrying to perfection of the universe, is in operation all the time. The world of heaven and earth, the world of bodies and souls, the world of animals, vegetables and minerals, and all other worlds, are being nurtured by His *Rububiyyat*. The worlds through which a human being passes before his taking shape as a sperm till his death, or his arrival in his second life, are all nourished from the fountain of *Rububiyyat*. Thus Divine *Rububiyyat*, because it comprehends all souls, bodies, animals, vegetables, and minerals etc. is named the most general grace, inasmuch as everything that exists is its recipient and comes into being through it. Although Divine *Rububiyyat* is the originator of everything that exists, and nourishes and sustains it, yet its greatest beneficiary is man because he derives benefit from the whole of creation. Therefore, man has been reminded that his God is *Rabb-ul-'Alamin* so that he should be encouraged to believe that the power of God Almighty is vast and that for man's benefit He can bring into being all types of resources.

The second excellence of God Almighty, which is His beneficence in the next degree and which is called general grace, is *Rahmaniyyat*, by virtue of which God is named Rahman in Sūrah Fatihah. In the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty is called *Rahman* because He bestowed upon every living thing, which includes man, its appropriate shape and qualities. That is to say, man was bestowed all faculties and powers and was given a shape and limbs which were needed by the type of life which had been designed for him and to which they were suited. Whatever was needed for his maintenance was provided. Birds, animals and man were all bestowed powers that were suited to them. Thousands of years before their coming into being, God Almighty by virtue of His attribute of *Rahmaniyyat*, created the heavenly and earthly bodies so that all living things might be safeguard-

ed. No one's action has anything to do with the *Rahmaniyyat* of God Almighty. It is pure mercy which came into operation before the coming into being of living things. Man is the principal beneficiary of the *Rahmaniyyat* of God Almighty, inasmuch as everything is sacrificed for his success. Therefore, he is reminded that God is *Rahman*.

The third excellence of God Almighty, which is His beneficence in the third degree, is *Rahimiyyat*, by virtue of which God has been named *Rahim* in Sūrah Fatihah. In the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān, God is called *Rahim* when accepting the prayers, supplications and righteous actions of people, He safeguards them against calamities, misfortunes and waste of effort. This beneficence is described as special grace and is confined to human beings. Other things have not been bestowed the faculty of prayer and supplication and righteous action, but man has been bestowed this faculty. Man is an articulate animal and can be the recipient of Divine grace through the exercise of his faculty of speech. Other things have not been bestowed this faculty. It is obvious, therefore, that supplication is a quality of humanness, which is inherent in man's nature. Man derives grace from the Divine attribute of *Rahimiyyat* as he derives from the attributes of *Rububiyyat* and *Rahmaniyyat*; the only difference is that *Rububiyyat* and *Rahmaniyyat* do not demand supplication as they are not confined to man and bestow their grace upon all living things, and indeed *Rububiyyat* comprises within itself beneficence towards animals, vegetables, minerals and heavenly and earthly bodies. Nothing is outside the operation of its grace. As a contrast, *Rahimiyyat* is a special robe of honour for man. If man does not derive benefit from this attribute, he reduces himself to the condition of animals, nay, even of minerals. The operation of *Rahimiyyat* having been confined to man, and supplication being needed for bringing it into operation, it shows that there is a type of Divine grace which is conditioned upon supplication and cannot be achieved without supplication. This is the way of Allāh and is a definite law the contravention of which is not permissible. That is why all Prophets [peace be on them] supplicated for their followers. The Torah reveals that on many occasions the children of Israel offended God Almighty and were about to be chastised, but the chastisement was averted by the prayers, supplications and prostrations of Moses [peace be on him] though time after time God announced that He would destroy Israel. All this shows that prayer is not in vain, nor is it a type of worship which does not procure any grace.

This is the thinking of those who do not estimate God Almighty as He should be estimated, and who do not reflect deeply on God's words nor do they observe the law of nature. The truth is that grace does certainly descend in response to supplication and bestows salvation upon us. It is the grace of *Rahimiyyat* through which man makes progress. Through this grace, man arrives at the stage of *Vilayat*, and believes in God Almighty as if he was beholding Him. Intercession also depends upon the attribute of *Rahimiyyat*. It is *Rahimiyyat* of God Almighty that demands that good people should intercede for bad people.

The fourth beneficence of God Almighty, which might be named most special grace, is *Malikiyyat* of the Day of Judgement, by virtue of which He has been named *Maliki-Yaum-id-Din* in Sūrah Fatihah. The difference between this attribute and *Rahimiyyat* is that through prayer and worship *Rahimiyyat* operates to establish a person's worthiness and through *Malikiyyat* the reward is awarded. Through the operation of *Rahimiyyat*, a person deserves success in an affair like a student's passing an examination, but to be awarded the rank or other object for which the examination was undertaken and passed is by virtue of the attribute of *Malikiyyat*. These two attributes indicate that the beneficence of *Rahimiyyat* is achieved through God's mercy and the favour of *Malikiyyat* is achieved

through the grace of Almighty God. *Malikiyyat* would manifest itself on a vast and perfect scale in the hereafter, but in accordance with the measure of this world, all these four attributes manifest themselves in this world as well. [Ayyam-us-Sulah, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 14, pp. 247-251]

If God is not believed in as All-Powerful, all our hopes would be frustrated. The acceptance of our prayers is dependent upon the belief that when God wills He can create in the particles of the body or in the soul powers that they may not possess. For instance, we pray for the recovery of a person who is ill and he appears likely to die. Then we supplicate that God may create in the particles of his body a strength that should save him from death. We observe that very often such supplication is accepted. In many cases, we are at first intimated that a certain person is about to die, and that his powers of life are at an end. But when our supplication reaches its climax and its intensity becomes poignant and painful, we seem to arrive at the point of death, then it is revealed to us by God that the powers of life have been revived in the person concerned. Then suddenly he begins to show signs of health as if he was dead and has come to life. I remember that at the time of the plague I supplicated: O Mighty and Powerful God, safeguard us against this calamity and create in our bodies an antidote which should save us from the poison of the plague. Then God Almighty created that antidote in us and said: 'I shall safeguard you against death by plague and all those who dwell within your house and are not arrogant', that is to say, those who are not disobedient to God and are righteous would all be saved. God also said that Qadian would be safeguarded, that is to say, Qadian would not be destroyed by the plague like many other villages. This is what we all saw, and we observed the fulfilment of all these things…. Thus our God creates new powers and qualities in the particles of the body. Having been reassured by God the Perfect, we avoided the human precaution of inoculation against the plague. Many of those inoculated died, but we are, by the grace of God Almighty, still alive. Thus does God Almighty create particles as He created particles in our bodies by way of antidote. He also creates souls as He breathed into me a pure soul by which I came alive. We need not only that He should create the soul and revive our body, but our soul also needs another soul which should revive it. Both these souls are created by God. He who has not grasped this mystery is unaware of God's Powers and is heedless of God. [Nasim-e-Da'wat, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 390-391]

Our Ever-Living and All-Sustaining God talks to me like one person talks to another. I ask Him something and supplicate Him and He answers in words full of power. If this should happen a thousand times, He does not fail to answer. In His words He discloses wonderful hidden matters and displays scenes of extraordinary powers till He makes it clear that He alone is the One who should be called God. He accepts prayers and intimates their acceptance. He resolves great difficulties and through repeated supplications revives those who are sick and very nearly dead. He discloses all these designs of His in advance through His words which relate to future events. He proves that He is the God of heaven and earth. He addressed me and told me that He would safeguard me against death by plague and all those who dwell in my house in piety and righteousness. Who else is there in this age except myself who has published such a revelation and disclosed God's promise concerning the members of his family and other pious people who dwell within his house? [Nasim-e-Da'wat, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 448-449]

Summary of Friday Sermon

Acceptance of Prayers

For one's prayers to be heard, for one to be truly guided and to become a righteous believer, one must abide by God's injunctions and fortify one's faith.

Source: Friday Sermon Archives from www.alislam.org

Huzoor[aa] gave a discourse on the requisites of acceptance of prayer. He recited verse 187 of Sūrah Al Baqarah at the start of the Friday Sermon today, its translation reads: **'And when My servants ask thee about Me, say: 'I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So they should hearken to Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way.'** (2:187).

Huzoor[aa] said the aforementioned verse is cited in the Qur'ān next to the commandment and details regarding fasting. This signifies that in order to become an *Abd* (servant) of God and to experience acceptance of prayer one is required to undergo the endeavour of spiritual exercise *(mujahida)* and fasting in Ramadān is a *mujahida*. Therefore, believers should fast with this insight and with full awareness of the requisites of fasting. God is not interested in man's starvation or apparent worship. Thus, aforementioned verse makes the acceptance of supplicant conditional; it does not state that the call of anyone will be listened instantly or regardless of what is the condition of the person. It is thus stated '…**they should hearken to Me…**' and '…**believe in Me…**'. Huzoor[aa] said this commandment is for Muslims, yet it states belief. Explaining, he said a single verbal declaration does not comprise 'belief', rather there should be development of faith and one should move towards sincere piety, then alone would one be guided and would attain the status of a true believer. It is also stated '…**that they may follow the right way** …', moving towards true piety and searching perfection in guidance.

Huzoor[aa] said the ways of how to hearken to God after hearing His commandment are explained in the Holy Qur'ān, which is a collection of guidance, in which it is stated in the very beginning; **'This is a perfect Book; there is no doubt in it; *it is* a guidance for the righteous,'** (2:3). Huzoor[aa] further expounded that for those who search for

guidance, who wish to strengthen their belief in God, attain the heights of piety and wish that their prayers are accepted there is no other way but to turn to the perfect Qur'ān. In this Book are all the ways taught by God to accomplish one's life in this world and the Hereafter. We find the examples of these ways in the blessed model of the Holy Prophet[sa] whose life was a living example of all the excellent teachings of the Qur'ān. God states: **'Verily you have in the Prophet of Allāh an excellent model, for him who fears Allāh and the Last Day and who remembers Allāh much.'** (33:22). All that is cited in the aforementioned verse is acceptable if effort is made to adopt the blessed model of the Holy Prophet[sa]. Adopting his blessed model is in compliance with the verse 2:187, for only 'servants' of God would ask the Holy Prophet[sa] about gaining nearness to God and it is God's commandment to follow the Holy Prophet[sa].

Huzoor[aa] said a Muslim cannot imagine following anyone else's model. If there is any other model for believers it is of the Companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] who were perfectly obedient to him. In the current age it is the true and ardent devotee of the Holy Prophet, the Promised Messiah[as] who taught us new ways of understanding the Qur'ān and to totally lose ourselves in ardent love of the Prophet[sa]. There could not be another perfect *Abd* of God until the end of time that could attain the standard of the Prophet[sa]. God thus said to His perfect *Abd* that those who gathered around him and asked about God should be told that He is near but attainment of this nearness requires keen insight of spiritual knowledge and for this they have to look to God's beloved.

Those who put the blessed model in practice and truly loved the Holy Prophet[sa] became true servants of God. They experienced Divine nearness, acceptance of prayers and God's help and support. Today, the answer for those who supplicate to God remains the same as it was 1,400 years ago. The God of the Holy Prophet[sa] is Living today as He was then and will always be. What is required is putting the blessed model into practice, to time and again keep it in view so that we may develop in piety and can keep an eye on our weaknesses, so that our belief in God is strengthened and we are able to understand the philosophy of prayer.

Huzoor[aa] said Ramadān is a month of heightened worship of God, avoiding sin and discharging rights of mankind. The blessed practices of the Holy Prophet[sa] used to gain tremendous momentum during this month. He was a very magnanimous person but in Ramadān his magnanimity would greatly increase in intensity. Although an ordinary person cannot reach his status, yet we are required to follow him. Huzoor[aa] explained that God has given each person individual capacity and whatever capacity one has been given, one is commanded to utilize it fully. God is fully aware of our capacities, He states that the blessed model of the Holy Prophet[sa] is before us and we have to follow it. Each person will be recompensed in this regard in accordance with his or her capacity. It is not for man to determine the level of capacity because God knows this best, it is for man to try the utmost and then leave the matter to God. Indeed, it is for man to do Jihad (striving). Explaining the term Jihad, Huzoor[aa] said it signifies to make an effort with one's entire capacity, to strive and endeavour and to try with all one's enthusiasm and eagerness to such an ex-

tent that one is exhausted.

God states in the Holy Qur'ān: **'And *as for* those who strive in Our path — We will surely guide them in Our ways…'** (29:70). Here the Arabic word *Jahadu* is used to signify that one who wants to attain nearness to God has to do Jihad. This is a constant effort which is exhausting. By virtue of God's attribute of Al Karim (The Noble), in spite of this commandment, He informed the Holy Prophet[sa] to tell people that if they took one step towards God, He would take two steps towards them and if they walked to God, He would run to them. Huzoor[aa] said our Beloved God is such that when He sees that His servants hearken to Him and take their very first step in doing so, out of His mercy He lessens the distance and embraces the wish of a weak person to become *Abd ur Rahman* (servant of the Gracious God). By virtue of Divine quality of Rahmaniyyat, man is brought closer to God.

Reverting to the earlier subject Huzoor[aa] said the perfect and blessed model of the Holy Prophet[sa] was extraordinary during Ramadān but even in ordinary times it presented unique examples. Once due to falling from horseback, a part of the Prophet[sa]'s body was badly injured and he could not offer Salāt standing up. He led congregational Prayer while seated but did not miss it. When his blessed cheek was badly injured during the battle of Uhad and he was in pain he came for Prayers as he normally would. Hazrat 'Aishah[ra] has of course related many incidents about the length and the beauty of the Salāt the Prophet offered which cannot be described in words. Thus was the blessed model set by him. Huzoor[aa] explained that God states that He grants His nearness when man hearkens to Him and the first and basic phase for this is keen worship. This eagerness should not be limited to Ramadān, rather like the Holy Prophet[sa], it should be remembered during other times, even times of distress.

God has stated that the sign of believers is that they **'…observe Prayer…'** (2:4) that is, they offer their Prayer in congregation. How could then, the perfect man, through whom God declared: **'Say, 'My Prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are *all* for Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.'** (6:163) ever disregard this commandment. Indeed, even in his last illness when he was extremely frail, he came to the mosque with support. Huzoor said this was due to him being totally lost in the love of God. Enhanced belief and climax in practice is attained when love surpasses and God has stated that we have a blessed model of surpassed love before us. So, when it is asked where God is, God should be found in the practice of His beloved and we should thus try and become true *Abd* of God.

Huzoor[aa] said populating mosques during Ramadān and then being forgetful, or vying with each other to come to the mosque when times, like currently, are difficult, and when situation improves being forgetful does not comprise hearkening to God. It is self-interest. Hearkening to God will be when the current situation, the emotional state of affairs and Ramadān with its spiritual ambiance will be gone but effort will still be made to put the model of the Holy Prophet[sa] in practice. Huzoor[aa] said due to the current situation there is attention towards worship. The circumstances re-

garding Ahmadiyyat in Pakistan have inclined the Ahmadis of the entire world towards improving the standards of worship. Many have received assurance due to prayers and Divine nearness and they have personally experienced manifestation of '…**I am near…'.** The difficult times in Pakistan and the following two Jalsas have sustained the condition. Now, it is Ramadān with its opportunities of acceptance of prayer. While an utmost effort should be made in this regard it should also be prayed that this state of affairs becomes permanent. Ahmadis understand that the condition that the two Jalsas generated will be further enhanced by Ramadān. However, effort should also be made that this becomes an enduring and lasting way and we continue to raise our standards of worship higher and higher. We should try to attain that Divine nearness through prayer, worship and good works that is enduring and the level of our *taqwa* and our worship should continue to enhance.

The Promised Messiah[as] said that our primary prayer should be for purification from sin. Once this prayer is accepted and man is pure in God's sight then man does not even need to make other prayers. However, it is a difficult prayer and it requires extremely hard work.

Huzoor[aa] said the Qur'ān carries numerous commandments and it is not possible to mention them all in one session. In Ramadān attention is drawn to recitation of the Qur'ān and to listen to Dars (lesson) of Qur'ān. Quranic commandments should be reflected on during these. Huzoor[aa] remarked that as he said before he will briefly mention a few aspects of the blessed model of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). A brief insight into his worship of God was given in the beginning. God states in the Qur'ān: '**…and fulfil the covenant; for the covenant shall be questioned about.'** (17:35) The extent to which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) adhered to this is evident from a tradition when two Muslims left home in Makkah to join other Muslims for battle of Badr. The pagans of Makkah stopped them on their way and asked where they were going. They told them they were going to Medina. The pagans took a promise from them that they would not join the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) in battle. When the two reached the Prophet they narrated everything to him. He said, 'go and fulfil your promise, we will ask for God's help against the enemy with prayer.' Huzoor[aa] said this is a supreme example at a time when Muslims were in an extremely vulnerable position against a well-armed pagan army to ask his Companions to fulfil their promise and not join in battle. However, history bears witness how God manifested signs of His nearness to the perfect *Abd* that the vulnerable side visibly triumphed over a well-armed army. Then at victory of Makkah when a woman decided to give refuge to enemy the Prophet said' O Umme Hani, whoever you give refuge to, we give refuge to.' Thus upholding the undertaking of a believing woman.

Huzoor[aa] said we note that these days promises are broken over trivial matters. Such situations also present themselves in our Community. On top of breaking promises, at times falsehood is also used. Huzoor[aa] said God has declared falsehood comparable to *shirk* (associating partners with God) and it expels a person from being God's *Abd*. The Qur'ān

states: **'…Shun therefore the abomination of idols, and shun all words of untruth,'** (22:31). The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said that the Qur'ān has called untruth filth and has equated it to idols and one who indulges in *shirk* cannot claim to be an *Abd*.

Huzoor[aa] said this is alarming as some people do not think much of saying the odd untrue thing whereas the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said that it is sufficient for a person to be a liar if he/she spreads all unfounded information. In one Hadīth it is related that God is certainly not in need of a person to forgo food and drink if he cannot stop speaking and practicing untruth. Another Hadīth relates fasting is a shield, until such time that a person does not tear it up with falsehood and back-biting. Huzoor[aa] said during Ramadān we should reflect on our weaknesses and try and remove them. Then alone can we be true *Abd* of God and be among those who hearken to Him and then can listen to the sound of **'I am near'**.

Huzoor[aa] said the life of the Holy Prophet[sa] gives a detailed insight into how he discharged the dues to society. For example there is the right of the ties of kinship/ relationships as mentioned in 4:2. The verse is recited at the Nikah ceremony yet there is little attention given to discharging the dues. Huzoor[aa] said many problems arise due to lack of attention given to this and it is a big reason for breakup in relationships these days. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) not only fulfilled the rights of close relations he also honoured foster-relations. Huzoor[aa] said it is often noted that each others' relations [in marriage] are not respected and this causes breakups. God states that if His beneficence is to be had then along with His worship dues of mankind must also be paid. This can be seen in the blessed model of the Holy Prophet[sa] and he has also enjoined us to inculcate these principles.

The Promised Messiah[as] said that God states He is near but man is distant. If man reforms his deeds and goes to God he will find Him near. Huzoor[aa] said this is a reciprocal matter and in it in any which way, man has to take the initiative. May God make it so that we practice this so that our prayer to be protected from sin with God's Grace in this blessed month and we are among those who are close to God.

Huzoor[aa] said another prayer during Ramadān should be, which the Community is making anyway and Huzoor[aa] was reminding, particularly regarding Pakistan and particularly regarding the Ahmadis in Pakistan. The prayer is that may God ever keep us wrapped in His mercy, may He bring the schemes of the enemy to naught, keep the Community in His special protection, manifests His Power and may He destroy those who in God's sight are evil among men. The leadership of Pakistan does not seem to understand the condition of the country, where it is going, what is impending. God alone may have mercy and show us the progress of Islām and Ahmadiyyat greater than before.

Acceptance of Prayers

By: Naiela Anwar, Saskatoon South, Saskatoon Region

"**And when My servants ask thee about Me, say: I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So they should hearken to Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way.**" (2:187).

"There are many of us who pray on the surface, and then think that God is bound to hear and fulfill our prayers, and then become sad when the prayers are not answered" (Friday Sermon, April 16th, 2021).

In elaboration to the above presented quote by Hazrat Khalīfatul Masīh Vaa, the nature of prayer, acceptance of prayer, and steadfastness and perseverance will be discussed.

The Nature of Prayer

In the Friday Sermon of April 16th, 2021, Hazrat Khalīfatul Masīh Vaa draws our attention towards prayers and being upset when they are not fulfilled. He expands on this, stating, "What must be realized is that we must first strengthen our faith and relationship with God, and analyze ourselves to see whether or not we are acting upon His commandments. We must see whether we are steadfast, or do we falter at the slightest hardship and trial."

The Promised Messiahas also reflected upon this on one occasion, detailing that a surface level prayer with no depth of heart or fear of Allāh is just utterance of words. Rather, he states, "It is when the soul of the supplicant flows like water to the threshold of the Divine and one seeks the strength to combat

one's weaknesses" (*Malfūzāt*, Vol. 7, p. 263).

Thus, it is clear that it is not enough to have a relationship with Allāh the Almighty that is only filled with our own requests, desires and wants from Him. Allāh is the Most Gracious and Merciful, and His kindness towards us knows no bounds. With this, however, it is vital that we establish a relationship with Him, and become His most humble servants. This is why the Promised Messiahas states, **"Our God is a very loyal God, and for those who remain loyal to Him He shows wonderful works"** (Our Teachings, p. 12).

Nature of Acceptance of Prayers

The diversity of situations and prayers can be such that a prayer is made that is not in any way possible. For example, if one is to pray that they wake up the next day fluent in Italian without having ever studied it in their lifetime, we cannot ever say that such a prayer would be granted. Additionally, it is also possible that a prayer is made that is not beneficial for the person.

In the Friday Sermon of April 16th, 2021, Hazrat Khalīfatul Masīh Vaa beautifully discusses this as he states, "If a person has prayed to their utmost capacity and then Allāh the Almighty has rejected the request or the results were not positive, then there was some divine wisdom behind this decision and it would be beneficial for that individual…Some people pray and say, 'O Allāh, even if it is not beneficial for me, still accept this prayer'; this has been the case in certain marriage proposals as well. Allāh the Almighty heard that individual's prayer and he was married where the person desired, but after a short while, it ended in divorce. Therefore, one should not pray in this manner. Sometimes, in order to teach the person a lesson, Allāh the Almighty accepts the prayer of a person which is not in their favour. But when that person sees the outcome, they then seek forgiveness and repent."

To summarize, Allāh the Almighty is All-Knowing, and it is through His mercy and kindness that He chooses to grant or fulfill our prayers in the best manner. This may include a prayer not being granted because it does not hold the best outcome for us or being fulfilled in another manner that is best suited for our needs.

Steadfastness and Perseverance

It is often in times of hardship and tribulations that we seek the help of Our Creator. No matter the nature of the situation or event, we may pray for strength, ease, or resolution. There are two aspects of this to reflect on, the reason for the hardship and the manner in which we conduct ourselves through it.

To illustrate these aspects, a passage by the Promised Messiahas is presented:

"The distinguishing sign of a believer is that he should not only be one who shows patience but that he should go further and cheerfully accept his situation even during times of hardship… There are many that start complaining when they are faced with a difficulty and that is as if they break their relationship with God…if a person is facing difficulties he should be fearful of the possibility of an even greater hardship befalling him. … Most difficulties come as a warning. In the beginning it is light in appearance and a person does not consider it to be a hardship but then it turns into a most distressing ordeal" (Malfoozat, Vol. 10, pg. 86-89).

Finally, I would like to touch on the journey we are all on. A continuous struggle to improve ourselves and be better followers. This is not an overnight process, and so prayer, and its acceptance must also be met with patience, effort, steadfastness, and perseverance. The Promised Messiahas beautifully speaks to this point when he writes, "…it is necessary to remember that there is a gradualness in the affairs of the world. How many stages has a child to pass through before becoming a full grown person? How much time is taken by a seed to become a tree? In the same way, Divine matters are also completed gradually…Perseverance and resolve are such excellent qualities that without them a person cannot traverse the stages of success. It is necessary, therefore, that he should first pass through difficulties. That is why it is said:

"Aye, surely there is ease after hardship" (94:7)" (Malfūzāt, vol. III, pp. 202-203).

May Allāh continue to give us all the strength to tread through our hardships and may we always pray that He continues to accept our prayers in the best and most knowing manner. Amīn!

Acceptance of Prayers

By: Amtul Hadi, Vaughan South

People usually look for miracles in things that are extraordinary. It has to have a big impact on their lives somehow to make them believe in miracles. Doing this, we often forget to look at the small stuff. Things that happen to our everyday lives are also reminders that no matter how big or small a miracle, everything is from our Creator. Allāh looks out for us in more ways than we can even imagine. He says in the Holy Qur'ān, "And your Lord says: 'Pray unto Me; I will answer your *prayer*." (40: 61)

For our young readers, let the above verse be a reminder to take a step back and think of all the small things that happened to you that you knew were the result of your prayers. Let me give you some examples of my (not so small) small miracles that have had a huge impact on me. These examples are a reminder for me that Allāh is all I need. I once had to take some photographs outside for a family and had no lighting equipment and was relying completely on sunlight to shine my way. It was my first big project and I was very nervous. However, when I got in my car, the clouds covered the sky and there was no sunlight anymore. They were so heavy that it seemed like they would not clear anytime soon. I got into my car and prayed the whole way for the sun to come out again. When I got there, believe it or not, the whole sky cleared up and the sun came back like it never left! I took as many pictures as I needed and the clouds came back when I was on my way back home. It was a good day Alhamdulillāh.

Allāh says, "**And when My servants ask thee about Me, say: I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me.** " (2:187).

I remember there was one time I went to the mall and the parking lot was fully packed. Someone in the car said that it's impossible for us to find a parking spot now. My mind immediately went to asking Allāh for help since I was told nothing is impossible for Him. Immediately after I started praying for a spot, we found a parking spot right next to the mall entrance. Ever since then, I have learned this 'trick' and to this day, whenever I pull into a busy parking lot, I have faith in Allāh that I will find a parking spot and within minutes of praying, I always do! Alhamdulillāh! (Try it for yourself, it works!)

Let me give you another example that I always get a kick out of. When I was getting married, I really wanted an outdoor photoshoot in my red lehenga. My wedding was in October so the fall leaves would look amazing in the pictures. However, living in Canada, we all know how much it rains in October and how cold it gets to be outside without a jacket. I knew that this was something I needed to pray for (a lot) and so I did! I prayed for a warm sunny day and that's exactly what I got. A beautiful sun filled and

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Personal Incident of Acceptance of Prayers

By: Salmana Rajput, Vaughan South

Acceptance of prayer is something that I have experienced and witnessed first hand, and continue to do so. Several such incidents are coming to mind, but I will share two of those here for the benefit of our readership.

The first story I am sharing here is related to my husband, who was then serving as Muhtamim Khidmat Khalq, Majlis Khuddāmul Ahmadiyya Canada (MKAC). During the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, MKAC had launched a Neighborhood Helper Campaign. Through this campaign, he was helping out an individual by driving him to a doctor's appointment. After dropping that person, when my husband was about to leave that parking lot, he realized that the parking meter only took a credit card, or two dollars in cash. My husband did not have his credit card on him at that time, and could only find a total of one dollar in his car. So, he turned to God, and made a quick prayer in his heart. Right then, God put in his mind to check the parking meter's return slot. When he put his hand in that slot, he found a loonie there, and along with his dollar, he was able to make his parking payment and leave the premises. This incident, although very short in nature, always reminds me that if you put your trust in Allāh, and Allāh alone, He never lets you down.

The second story is very personal and to this day, shakes me to my very core and re-strengthens my trust in God Almighty every time I think about it. As I was expecting my daughter, the doctors had advised me that there may be some complication, and that I was required to remain on bed rest for several weeks. Understandably, I was very nervous and scared, so I prayed fervently to God. I asked God to show me a sign if there was nothing to worry about. After only two days of fervent prayers, I was unexpectedly visited by a lady who gave me an account of an incident which had happened to her about 25 years ago. She related that she had an experience where the doctors had given her extremely unsettling news, yet she had relied on prayers and none of the doctors' predictions had come true! This was an out-of-this-world sign for me and I spent the next few days thanking God for such a quick and clear response to my prayer. After receiving this sign as a response to my prayer, I never worried about my condition, regardless of what the doctors told me, as I knew that God had my back. And rightfully so, none of the concerns that the doctors raised had any practical truth to them and I was blessed with a very healthy daughter, by the Grace of God!

Prayer Restrains One From Indecency and Manifest Evil

By: Name: Laiba Sabooh, Mississauga West

In Islām, prayer is an important part of one's daily life because it allows one to communicate with God. We are constantly being reminded to offer prayers because we obtain many great benefits in doing so. God Almighty states in the Holy Qur'ān:

"Recite that which has been revealed to thee of the Book, and observe Prayer. Surely, Prayer restrains *one* from indecency and manifest evil, and remembrance of Allāh is the greatest *virtue*. And Allāh knows what you do." (29:46)

Salāt (prayer) is the primary source of purifying the self, as the above verse signifies. This verse speaks of reciting the word of God, and to observe prayer. Prayer is a source of purifying one's self when it is observed with its due requisites. Remembrance of Allāh is the greatest virtue because it prevents one from impurities and wrongful deeds. It is the responsibility of each Ahmadi to focus on observing prayers, for prayers are the milestone from where the spiritual journey begins. Prayer safeguards us from all evil if it is observed sincerely and from one's true heart. Only then will we be among those who fulfil the purpose of the advent of the Promised Messiah[as].

> The requirement of offering Salāt is for every Muslim, and is to be observed every single day, five times a day. By observing prayer, one has the opportunity to purify themselves daily. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa] said in his Friday Sermon of February 15, 2018,
>
> **"The Promised Messiah[as] said that Salāt alone is the virtue that dispels satanic weaknesses; however, Satan wishes man to stay away from Salāt because he knows it is Salāt that would purify man. The requirement of fasting [during Ramadān] is once every year; while Zakāt is incumbent on the well-off individuals only. However, Salāt is for everyone — it should be observed to seek Allāh's bounties, for the treasures of Allāh are immeasurable. All one needs is the certainty that one is standing before an All-hearing, All-Seeing Being Who can provide in a split second if He so wishes. Just as a soldier would never surrender his best weapon in a battlefield, Salāt is the most excellent weapon for a believer and a believer should safeguard it at all costs."**

Thus, Salāt protects from Satanic weaknesses.

At the National UK Ijtimā' of Khuddāmul Ahmadiyya, on September 23rd, 2018, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad[as] said,

> **"We are living in an era, where at every turn, we are exposed to indecency, immorality and harmful vices that seek to lure mankind away from virtue and drag them towards sin. More than ever before, it is necessary for a believer to protect himself from the countless evils and immoralities that pervade society. For this, we must use that method which Allāh the Al-**

mighty has Himself given us, which is to bow down before Him five times each day. This is the path to salvation and those who walk upon it are not only saved from Allāh's wrath but are the recipients of His love, His grace and His great rewards."

Many people offer Salāt but continue to commit sins. Why are their prayers not restraining them from sin? In his speech in 2017, National President, Respected Lal Khan Sahib stated an analogy of this situation. He said,

> "A patient complains to his physician that the medicine given to him has done no good. The physician is surprised and asks him if he has been taking it properly and on time? If the medicine isn't taken properly, it will not work effectively said the Physician."

Just like the medicine, if Salāt isn't offered properly and on its prescribed timings, it will not restrain one from impurities. Indeed it is for us to observe Salāt and establish it first, it is as a consequence of observing it sincerely that Salāt safeguards us in return.

We cannot be useful in the mission of the Promised Messiah[as] who had come to pursue the task of the Holy Prophet[sa] if we do not purify ourselves, and we can only purify ourselves by establishing Salāt and offering it sincerely. The Promised Messiah[as] called the 'spiritual pleasure' experienced during Salāt the earthly Paradise.

In the end, I will present a couple of extracts from the address of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa]'s address. Describing the power of sincere prayer, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

> **"If you ignore your duty to worship Allāh and focus upon material interests, you may be successful in attaining worldly pleasures, but remember that a true Muslim focuses upon the permanence of the next life and not just the fleeting pleasures of this temporary worldly existence. So, the only solution and the only way is prayer."**

Huzoor[aa] continued:

"If we are regular in prayer and if we pray with sincerity then our lives will be worthy of success. According to the promise of Allāh the Almighty, we will be freed from the shackles of wrongdoing, evil and immoral behaviour. We will be those who fulfil both the rights of our Creator and of one another. We will be those who spread love, tolerance and compassion amongst society. We will be true Muslims."

May Allāh enable us to offer our prayers with its due requisites so that we can restrain from impurities and wrongful deeds.

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Purpose of Hijāb

By: Rida Hashmat, Windsor

Head bonnets in the Amish religion, turbans in the Sikh religion, sheitels in the Jewish religion, and the Hijāb in the Islāmic religion are all examples of head coverings worn by members of their corresponding religious communities. A majority of these coverings are worn in order to reflect simplicity, modesty, and humility. Along with this identity plays a major role as well. A Sikh individual can be recognized as a Sikh through their turban just as a Muslim woman can be recognized as a Muslim through their Hijāb. Overall, there are a variety of reasons why different individuals wear head coverings. As a Muslim woman, I wear a Hijāb because it allows me to feel empowered and proud of my religion while feeling protected from the many ills of society. I am also able to please my Creator which is the core value of Islām.

The times are rapidly evolving, and this has resulted in the increase of leniency even in terms of children and students in school. One such example relates to dress codes in schools which once reflected the policy "modesty is best". Now a shift towards "freedom" is occurring and dress codes are becoming less focused on "modesty". Around the world, there has been a shift away from modesty and towards allowing individuals to express themselves even if it means exposing various parts of the body. For instance, the Toronto District School Board allows students to wear clothes that expose parts of their body such as their midriff which was not earlier allowed. One mother's perspective on this is that allowing children to wear clothes such as pajamas and tube tops can cause confusion for them. This is because in the working world, professionals are required to follow dress codes and dress appropriately (Bielski, 2019). This is a valid point as the reality is that society itself does have a certain moral standard for people to follow. If society had no laws, standards or overall rules even untold in society, there would be no order or discipline and chaos would occur.

Freedom, which is an ongoing discussion in society, also plays a role. If school boards are allowing students to wear clothes that expose their bodies, students should also be free to wear clothes that cover their body. Governing bodies such as the France senate which has voted to ban the wearing of Hijāb for individuals under 18 are contradicting their own beliefs of freedom by stating that women can avoid oppression by not being "forced" to wear the Hijāb before 18. It is clear that the consideration for women who feel free by wearing the Hijāb is being completely ignored.

The topic of oppression and deprivation of rights in regard to women in Islām is crucial to discuss. In modern society, many individuals who are not Muslim view Muslim women as oppressed and deprived of rights and freedoms. In reality, the Hijāb is a form of protection for women. As a famous proverb says, "prevention is the better part of the cure". Further, in the book *Pathway to Paradise*, it is highlighted that

"erosion of moral values can be prevented, and society is safeguarded from problems such as adultery, teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases." (Lajna Imāillāh U.S.A., 1996). Many women have felt judged and seen as "just an object" in the so-called free society we have today. Islām allows women to feel protected and free by giving them the opportunity and commandment to practice and observe modesty.

Rights for women in Islām have been established long before the ones granted to women in the western society. In Canada in 1917, women were granted the right to vote. Many years prior to this, Islām gave women rights in inheritance, property, and financial freedom. Women are also granted the ability to attain the same level of spiritual rewards as men are in the religion of Islām whilst providing special considerations for women's issues and allowing for leniency during certain periods for woman.

Hijāb, niqab, burqa, jilbab, these are all forms of coverings that Muslim women use to cover themselves and protect their chastity. In a society filled with moral ills, rising cases of various forms of assault and crime and many becoming fearful for the safety of their children and families, Islām is the perfect religion that allows protection from all of these issues. If society were to follow the guidelines in Islām, many of these moral corruptions taking place could be prevented and completely avoided. For me Hijāb is something that boosts my confidence and allows me to showcase my identity that I am proud of. It also allows me to feel protected and to please my Creator which is the ultimate goal for Muslims. I do not wear the Hijāb for anyone, but I wear it for Allāh.

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warm day. Now you might think I got lucky? Well, the next day was our Valia and because I didn't pray for a warm sunny Valima day, it rained cats and dogs all day! It was a reminder from Allāh that He made that happen as a result of my prayers.

Our beloved Holy Prophet[sa] advised us to ask Allāh for anything and everything. There is a hadith that says, "Beg of Allāh all that you stand in need of, even the salt you need or the shoelace that has snapped." We turn to Allāh when we are in need of Him but forget to remember Him for our everyday needs. Everything comes from Allāh and we should make it a habit to ask Him for anything we need or want. We should develop a relationship so strong with our Master that we remember Him in our every thought.

What Does Islām Say about: GENDER EQUALITY

By Abeedah Muslun, Surrey Central Majlis

Equality is a very misunderstood topic in the modern age. As far as men and women are concerned, there is no inequality whatsoever. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān:

Surely, men who submit themselves *to God* and women who submit themselves *to Him*, and believing men and believing women, and obedient men and obedient women, and truthful men and truthful women, and men steadfast *in their faith* and steadfast women, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their chastity and women who guard their chastity, and men who remember Allāh much and women who remember *Him*—Allāh has prepared for *all of* them forgiveness and a great reward (33:36).

The Qur'ān is clear in stating that men and women are both *absolutely* and *unequivocally* equal in their status in front of God, and in expectation of the reward that they are to receive from Him. The length of the verse, with a specific mention of 10 different qualities, only goes to show how gravely important this subject is in the Holy Qur'ān. Had Islām considered men and women unequal, such a verse would not have existed.

Critics of Islām or those doubting Islām usually tend to point to issues related to inheritance, testimony of women, or the ahadith where it is stated that women are "deficient" or they are told to "obey" their husbands. However, all of this evidence is presented with a laser focus on certain phrases or statements, without looking at the bigger picture that Islāmic teachings present to the world. In fact, if we want to be fair, and place this kind of laser focus with a completely different intention, it may be declared that Islāmic teachings favour women too much and Islām may be accused of misandry.

For instance, at one point, a man asked the Holy Prophet[sa], who is most deserving of best treatment from him? The Prophet[sa] said, "Your mother". He asked the question two more times and got the same response, and only when he asked the question the fourth time did he receive the response, "Your father". (Bukhari)

A critical mind may look at this hadith and another hadith where it says, **"Paradise lies under the feet of the mother"** (Sunan Nisai) and declare Islām a misandrist faith. However, that would be a gross misrepresentation and misunderstanding of the faith of Islām. Where the *role* of women is being discussed, light is shed on female responsibilities, and where the *role* of men is being discussed, light is shed on male responsibilities.

To the men, Islām says, *treat your wives in the best manner* (4:20), and to the women, Islām teaches obedience and kind treatment of their husbands. The Prophet[sa] sums it up beautifully when he says, "You have rights over your wives, and they have rights over you".

The Holy Qur'ān says: *"...**They are a garment for you, and you are a garment for them**..." (2:188)*

Every statement that appears to be siding with one gender needs to be understood within its own context. If women are called "deficient," it is not a generalization nor a broad-brush representation of women in every aspect. It is only an indication of some of the challenges that they face while fulfilling the requirements of the law of Islām, and some of the concessions they are given due to menstrual cycles or to fulfill their responsibilities as mothers. In fact, there is much laxation in Islāmic rules for women due to their role as mothers - a role Islām considers very sacred as they are preparing the leaders of tomorrow.

Comparatively, men have the role of being the breadwinners and providing for their wives and children. Such separation of roles is intended in Islām to lead to a harmonious family life that brings pleasure and comfort for the whole family and ultimately contributes to societal peace. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa] explained in his address to Lajna at the occasion of UK's Ijtimā' on September 24, 2017:

'Both men, and women have been given differing roles, however, this should not be misunderstood to mean that women are incapable of understanding the responsibilities placed upon men. This idea of differing responsibilities is entirely normal and according to nature. Even amongst men, there are differences that exist, whereby people have differing skill-sets and abilities. For instance, some men are trained as doctors, others become engineers, teachers, scientists or a range of other professions and jobs. Yet, no matter how skilled a doctor is, he is not superior to the other professions and in other fields as well and vice versa.' (Address to Lajna , September 24, 2017, https://www.alislam.org/articles/womens-rights-and-equality/)

According to the Holy Qur'ān all human beings are created pure and both men and women are capable of acquiring the highest degree of moral and spiritual development. The Holy Qur'ān says:

But whoso does good works, whether male or female, and is a believer, such shall enter Heaven, and shall not be wronged even *as much as* the little hollow in the back of a date-stone. (4:125)

Regarding this, Huzoor[aa] explains:

'Whether due to a superiority complex or an inferiority complex, at times, men have considered themselves to be intrinsically different to women or women have considered themselves inherently different to men. However, the Holy Qur'ān has categorically refuted this concept by saying that men and women are of the same kind. It has clarified that men and women have the same feelings and emotions, similarly as each man will be accountable before Allāh for his deeds, so will each woman also be held accountable for her acts before God."(Address to Lajna , September 24, 2021, https://www.alislam.org/articles/womens-rights-and-equality/)

In other words, this teaching of Islām shows the tremendous amount of respect and dignity that is granted to women in Islām. In essence, Islām respects the different capacities and abilities of men and women, and provides them roles that are best suited for them.

The man's role then is to be the breadwinner and provider of the family, while the woman's role is to ensure the family unit is strengthened and children are brought up in the best environment. These are the primary roles of men and women, which of course do not mean that their other roles should be completely dismissed. As their primary roles are being fulfilled, women can work in a profession of their choice if they wish to earn a personal income. Similarly, men should play their part in the proper upbringing of children and providing their family the best treatment, as the Holy Prophet[sa] said:

"The best among you is the one who is best in treatment of his family." (Tirmidhi)

Being Organized

By: Sannah Chawdhary Calgary NW

Being organized plays an important role in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. While some may choose to procrastinate in keeping their homes, work areas and bedrooms clean, organization is a healthy habit that can benefit one's life.

Even if keeping organized is one of your weaknesses, there are some easy habits that you can incorporate into your daily routine which can leave you feeling refreshed and productive. Being organized not only tidies up your area, but it can allow you to feel more productive since you can save time looking for items that you might have been misplaced. You will feel less anxious, because you will know where you have set it down. For example, since right now most people are learning or working from home because of Covid-19, maintaining a schedule and an organized desk with all of your work in folders or file cabinets can reduce stress levels because you are not in a rush to look for files that have gotten lost in a pile of mess. By conserving structure in our everyday lives, you will internally feel cleansed and have peace of mind knowing where you have placed everything. It's also important to remember, that if you continuously tidy up places, you can categorize your home the way you please, in return creating a habit to consistently remain composed. Finally, when you live in a messy environment, it can depreciate your well-being since dust, and bacteria can gather up on surfaces that are not cleaned or touched often. Remaining uncluttered can reduce your stress levels and other health problems that may be associated with it.

Therefore, organization plays a vital role in having peace of mind mentally and physically looking neat. Islām also emphasizes on hygiene and cleanliness, as the Holy Prophet[sa] said, "Cleanliness is half of the faith." (Muslim)

May Allāh enable us to become organized and clean.

Canada's Response to Covid-19

By, Needa Chawdhry- RN-Calgary NW

This past year has been a true test of our nation's governance, resilience and unity. These trying times have brought out the best and worst in people and leaders. Through various lockdowns and restrictions, people's faith in government has fluctuated through having complete confidence to lacking all trust. When people started working from home and losing jobs the federal government stepped in and instituted an emergency fund, Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) for individuals so that they could still provide for their families. Numerous "work from home" benefits were introduced, as well as caregiver and childcare benefits to ensure that people felt supported. Regular updates became tradition to listen to and while everyone was scared of the unknown, it became a way to stay informed and updated about the current situation and what the government is doing to keep everyone safe.

Fast forward few months and the restrictions became difficult for everyone to follow as people were isolated, lonely. Through making sacrifices for the greater good by staying home, many thought that everyone was in this together and together everyone will get through.

When vaccine rollout began, nationwide there was

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Importance of Financial Sacrifice

By: Hina Zahid, Hamilton Mountain

> And why is it that you spend not in the way of Allāh, while to Allāh belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth? (57:11)

As humans, we have an instinctive desire to be good and to care for others. To truly care for one another, we must love for others what we love for ourselves. What better way to love one another than to give charity?

In religious terminology the term 'righteous' is used interchangeably with a 'good' person. However, in all of the places where the Holy Qur'ān has given a description of a good or a righteous person it always includes the quality of financial sacrifice for the sake of Allāh. The subject of financial sacrifice is so important that in the Holy Qur'ān Allāh has repeatedly drawn attention to it in many ways. In chapter 2 of the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh says;

"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East or the West, but truly righteous is he who believes in Allāh and the last day and the angels and the Book and the Prophets, and spends his money for love of Him, on the kindred and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and those who ask *for charity*, and for *ransoming* the captives; and who observes prayer and pays the Zakāt; and those who fulfil their promise when they have made one, and the patient in poverty and afflictions and *the steadfast* in time of war; it is these who have proved truthful and it is these who are the God-fearing. " (2:178).

According to the above-mentioned verse, without spending in the cause of Allāh, one cannot claim to be a good or righteous person. The financial sacrifice that Allāh has described specifically in this verse requires spending for the love of Him and for His creation.

As humans, nothing feels better than spending in the way of Allāh since it reminds us that everything in this world is immaterial and never initially belonged to us. We should always help our fellow brothers and sisters in need and have compassion for those who are suffering. The Promised Messiah[as] said:

"What a blessed time this is! No one is asked to lay down his life. This is not the time for offering the ultimate sacrifice; rather it is the time to spend out of one's possessions, according to one's means" (Al-Hakam Qadian, July 10, 1903).

Our worldly possessions are a test from Allāh and it is our duty to spend in His way from what He has provided us. In doing so we can be successful in this life and hereafter. When Allāh showers us with His favour and His grace; He invariably requires some sacrifice from us. Sacrifice is an essential way to gain

the nearness of Allāh and His pleasure.

Allāh Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:

"Never shall you attain to righteousness unless you spend out of that which you love; and whatever you spend, Allāh surely knows it well." (3:93)

Explaining the blessings of spending one's wealth in the way of Allāh the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said:

"Whoever spends anything in the cause of Allāh, is rewarded seven hundred times more" (Tirmidhi).

We need to understand that wealth can only be gained by the Will of Allāh. What we spend in the way of Allāh is what we really save because it is recorded in our name and our true return is the acceptance and pleasure of Allāh on the Day of Judgment. The Promised Messiah[as] also highlighted the importance of financial sacrifices in this day and age.

He[as] said: **"It goes without saying, that you cannot love two things at the same time: it is not possible for you to love wealth as well as to love Allāh. You can love only one of them. Lucky is he who loves Allāh. If any of you loves God and spends wealth for His sake, I am certain his wealth will increase more than that of others" (Majmu'ah Ishtaharat, volume 3, p. 497).**

In difficult economic times like the current pandemic, it can be tempting to forgo the responsibility to spend in the way of Allāh. But we need to remember that Allāh does not burden a soul more than it can bear to handle. In the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh repeatedly mentions that we should give from what Allāh has provided to us. It is not the amount but the spirit and willingness to please Allāh that we should focus on. May Allāh enable us all to understand the true concept of financial sacrifice, and may He enable us to sacrifice in His way from our wealth in a manner that is acceptable to Him. Amīn.

(Continued from page 21)

hope and excitement- something we had not felt in a very long time. As the world began getting vaccinated, Canada was still lagging behind and people began to wonder how a nation who spends so much on healthcare was so far behind everyone else. Our American neighbours who got hit the hardest at the peak of the pandemic were returning to normalcy quicker than we were. Again, through patience and having faith, Canada eventually sped up vaccine administration, so much so that as of the middle of June, Canada had one of the highest rates of vaccination with hospitalizations dropping. Although we aren't exactly back to normal quite yet, everyday we are closer to seeing our friends and family and travelling, working and gathering like we used to. Although there have been shortfalls in this past year with Canada's response to the Covid-19 pandemic we are still fortunate to live in a country that knows the citizens will hold them accountable and the health and safety of everyone takes priority one way or another. Let's stay strong, get vaccinated and pray that everyone can safely gather soon. InshaAllāh!

Loyalty to Your Nation is Part of Faith

By: Fatima Mumtaz, Hamilton Mountain

Loyalty and allegiance mean faithfulness owed by duty or by a pledge or promise (Merriam, Webster). This is the definition of loyalty, often used in various relationships but today I will reflect on this term used in association with one's nation.

We celebrate Canada Day on the 1st of July of every year, and we show our love and respect to our country by decorating our homes, and sending best wishes, donating to shelter homes and participating in blood donation and food donation drives. To define our loyalty to the nation we frequently use the Hadīth, "Love for one's nation is a part of faith", but I often wonder what more can we do as Ahmadi Muslim Women to show our loyalty to our country.

Arguably, women have the most important role in a society, not only as responsible citizens of a country, but also for raising a loyal future generation of our country. A child's learning is influenced by what they see and not as much from just teachings, hence we become a role model for our children and we cannot make them loyal citizens if we do not show them loyalty by our own actions.

Loyalty is defined as a high moral quality, and according to the teachings of the Promised Messiah[as], when man adopts high moral qualities, he acquires nearness to Allāh. The people who have reached the apex of this moral quality are the Prophets of God, who have showed endless loyalty to God. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān:

"Nay, but whoso fulfils his pledge and fears *God*—verily, Allāh loves the God-fearing." (3:77)

Therefore, it is hard to show loyalty unless we adopt high moral qualities and the only way to do that is by following the true teachings of Islām. Islām teaches us the virtues of courtesy, courage, integrity, modesty, sympathy, empathy, generosity, forbearance, endurance, piety, equality, equity and so on. The Promised Messiah[as] explains in his lecture, The *Philosophy of the Teachings of Islām*: **"When a person exercises all these qualities on their proper occasions, and at their proper places, they are called the moral qualities and Prophet Muhammad[sa] possessed the highest moral qualities".**

The first step to demonstrate loyalty to country is by inculcating high moral qualities in ourselves before we teach these values to our children. Thus, if we want to love our nation, we have to follow the life of our beloved Prophet[sa] and develop love, kindness, generosity, sympathy, patience, discipline, integrity and other moral qualities in our lives. Only then we can be true role models for our children. If we do not follow the laws of our country and try to find shortcuts in our day-to-day life, how is it then expected that our children will become loyal citizens. This has to start from our homes with application of

these morals in our daily life to become loyal, and responsible members of the society, and hence the nation.

COVID has brought many realities in check, we do not need materialistic things to face these disasters but the high morals of patience, discipline, sympathy, courage, and integrity to pass through these difficult times. If we cannot act responsibly and do our due diligence, we cannot raise responsible and diligent children. Thus, in every aspect of our life whether at home, work or community, we must follow the laws of our country, and participate in every good cause constructively. Hazrat Abu Bakar[ra] narrates, he heard the Holy Prophet[sa] say, he who dishonours the ruler is dishonoured by Allāh." (Tirmidhi)

At the inauguration of Baitul-Samad mosque in Giessan Germany on August 21, 2017, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa] said,

> **"all immigrants must be loyal to their country and seek to help the nation progress and develop. Students should strive to excel so that they can go on to serve the nation, whilst businessmen or women should always be honest in their dealings and display integrity and should ensure that they pay all their taxes and fulfil their duties to the State."**

At the question of integration of women in to society Huzoor[aa] said,

> **"True integration requires that all people live peacefully with one another, manifest a spirit of love and kindness and, whether male or female, use all their faculties and capabilities to serve their nation and to help it advance."**

In his address at the Military Headquarters in Koblenz, Germany on 30th May 2012, Huzoor[aa] said,

> **"Despite the grave persecution they face, millions of Ahmadis continue to live in Pakistan. Despite being subjected to such sustained discrimination and cruelty in all aspects of their lives, they continue to keep a relationship of total loyalty and a true allegiance to the country."**

We are fortunate that we have the rights and freedom to practice our religion freely and also preach it. It thus makes it incumbent upon us to use all our capabilities in the best possible manner and serve as loyal and useful citizens of the country. We should show the world the true teachings of Islām by practicing the high moral qualities exhibited by the exemplary life of Prophet Muhammad[sa] and act upon the enlightening guidance of our beloved Khalīfa[as]. Amīn

Resources:

- Holy Qur'ān, chapter 3 Aal-e-`Imran: verse 77
- Address by Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad[aa] at the Military Headquarters in Koblenz Germany, May 30, 2012, al Islām.org,
- Address by Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad[aa] at the inauguration of Ahmadiyya mosque in Giessen Germany, August 21, 2017
- Gardens of the Righteous, pg.136, #676, Tirmidhi
- *The Philosophy Of The Teachings of Islām,* pg. 31

The Importance of Reading the Books of Promised Messiah[as]

By: Fareeha Noor - P.V.C.E

The Promised Messiah[as] has written more than 80 books mainly in Urdu, Arabic and Persian. Many of his books have been translated in English. Members of Jamā'at who are unable to read Urdu are fortunate enough to have his books translated in English. Therefore, no member can excuse that they cannot read the Promised Messiah's books. The Promised Messiah[as] himself declared that "**He who does not pay full attention to the directions of a Commissioned one and Messenger of God and does not study his writing with care also partakes of arrogance. Try, therefore, that you should not partake of arrogance in any respect so that you may escape ruin and you and yours may attain salvation**."[1] It is evident that Ahmadis should read the Promised Messiah[as]'s books with the purpose to store and use these valuable teachings, so that Ahmadis can endeavour to represent the Promised Messiah[as] and to be the true devotees of the Holy Prophet[sa].

We, as Ahmadi Muslims, are fortunate to be followers of the Promised Messiah[as] who left such unique treasures, in the form of books, at hand. Through his writings we can witness and feel Allāh's presence. This is explained by the Promised Messiah[as] himself. He states, "**I particularly experience God's miraculous power when I put my pen to paper. Whenever I write something in Arabic or Urdu, I feel as if someone is instructing me from within."**[2]

The relationship between Allāh and the Promised Messiah[as] makes it clear to us as his followers that we should be making every effort to read the books of the Promised Messiah[as] so that we too can uphold and continue what the Promised Messiah[as] was chosen to achieve.

Hence we must make it our foremost goal to read the books and writings of the Promised Messiah[as] so **"...that we can be those who light lamps of peace and security in our homes and our environs and that the love of God and His prophet be undulating in our hearts so that through it we go on illuminating the flames of love for mankind and sharing its pains throughout the world."**[3] May Allāh enable us to make us realize this to the best of our abilities. Amīn.

References

1. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as]. Nuzoolul Masih [Descent of the Messiah]. (Ziaul Islām, 1909). Taken from Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa], p. 3-4: http://www.alislam.org/urdu/rk/Books-Message-English.pdf
2. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmadas. Nuzoolul Masih [Descent of the Messiah]. (Ziaul Islām, 1909). Taken from Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V aba, p. 3: http://www.alislam.org/urdu/rk/Books-Message-English.pdf
3. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmadas. Nuzoolul Masih [Descent of the Messiah]. (Ziaul Islām, 1909). Taken from Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V aba, p. 4: http://www.alislam.org/urdu/rk/Books-Message-English.pdf

Backbiting—A Major Sin

By: Sidra Tahir, Windsor

Backbiting is one of the major sins in Islām, strictly prohibited by Allāh, through which the peace of society is destroyed, and disorder spreads.

Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān,

O ye who believe! avoid much suspicion; for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead? Certainly you would loathe it. And fear Allāh, surely, Allāh is Oft-Returning *with compassion and is* Merciful. (49:13).

From this verse, we see that Allāh has strongly forbidden backbiting because it creates enmity and discord among people, and leads to negative outcomes, likened to the level of distaste and loathing felt by one eating his dead brother's flesh.

To understand what backbiting is in greater detail, consider the following hadith narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurrairaʳᵃ, "Backbiting is when you talk about a person at his back, in a manner which he would not like." Then, the companions asked, "What if we mention the things which are actually found in that person?", to which the Holy Prophetˢᵃ replied, "If those things are actually found in that person, even then, you have in fact backbitten him. And if those things are not found in him, you have slandered" (Muslim).

The Promised Messiahᵃˢ has advised us to abandon the habit of backbiting, because Allāh abhors those who backbite (Friday Sermon, December 26, 2003).

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh Iʳᵃ echoed this sentiment when he advised that "people should avoid being too curious about the lives of others, as it leads to backbiting which in turn, leads one away from a righteous path". (Friday Sermon, December 26, 2003)

Backbiting becomes an avenue for people to express their anger and jealousy. Most of the time those who indulge in backbiting are hiding their own imperfections by harming others. Judgement is best left to Allāh, "Al-Hakam", or "The Giver of Justice". If a weakness is noted within another person, one should pray for them with a sincere heart.

On one occasion, the Holy Prophetˢᵃ said that on the day of Judgement, a man's deeds will be read out loud to him. He will tell Allāh of the good deeds he had done, but Allāh will say that good deeds have been taken away from his account because he participated in backbiting—such is the gravity of this sin (Targhib wal Tarheeb).

The Prophetˢᵃ discussed the punishment of backbiting further when discussing the night of ascension (mai'raj), during which he saw a group of people who were scratching their chests with their copper nails. He said, that when he asked, "Who are these people, O Jibril?", Hazrat Jibrilᵃˢ responded, "These are the people who ate the flesh of others and trampled people's honour" (Abu Dawood Kitab).

Huzooraᵃᵃ advises us, "No one is perfect, therefore we must look at our own condition critically before raising our finger towards another person. It takes courage to look at one's own faults. Once one starts to observe himself, one will refrain from discussing the affairs and weaknesses of others" (Friday Sermon, December 26, 2003).

May Allāh enable us to stay away from indulging in the sin of backbiting and help us to become righteous. Amīn.

Respect for Teachers

By: Aniqa Saadat, Calgary NW

In Islām, showing respect for teachers has always held very high standards. Both the Promised Messiah[as] and Hazrat Amman Jaan[ra] had a great respect and appreciation for knowledge and education, and thus regarded the status of teachers as distinguished and venerable. One instance of showing this respect is depicted in the book *Hazrat Amman Jaan[ra]*:

> Mahmood Ahmad Irfaani Sahib has related that his father Mian Yaqoob Ali Sahib[ra] narrated to him with tears in his eyes of the reception the Promised Messiah[as] gave him, when he went to teach his son Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad[ra]. He was truly amazed at the polite and respectful welcome of the Promised Messiah[as], who reassured him that he would take care of any of his needs. Mian Yaqoob Ali Sahib expressed that it was his good fortune to have the opportunity to serve the Promised Messiah's family. However, the Promised Messiah [as] replied, "no, it is necessary to look after one's teacher also". (*Hazrat Amman Jaan: An inspiration for us all, pg. 121)*

As we see the examples from the Promised Messiah's life showing great deal of respect for teachers, we must also adopt these morals and values. Due to COVID-19, schools have undergone a great deal of stress in keeping their students, staff, and administration safe. The majority of schools moved online when the pandemic began, and only recently have some schools opened for in-person learning. Through these uncertain and confusing times, teachers have continuously been working hard to provide the education that their students need in order to succeed, while keeping their students' wellbeing at the top of their priority. Teachers had to work tirelessly to convert their in-person lessons to be able to be taught online. Scheduling times for students to meet them online outside of class for extra help, or to talk if they needed an adult other than their parents to confide in, sometimes put teachers in a position where they disregarded their own mental health for the benefit of their students. Even with schools opening up, teachers had to remain vigilant by making sure their lessons were accessible online for students who could not attend class due to self-isolation, illness, or other reasons that kept them at home. As a student teacher, I had the opportunity to complete my practicum in-person at a high school. I observed my partner teacher work for hours after school to prepare her lessons for the next day, post lesson material for students in her class who were in self-isolation and create more lessons for the upcoming weeks.

Students who are learning online, as well as in person must realize the amount of work teachers are doing to teach their students, and the amount of respect teachers deserve from their students. Saying hello, asking how teachers are doing, saying thank you, these small gestures go a long way.

As Ahmadi Muslim, may Allāh enable us to emulate the best moral values taught to us by Islām and our elders—one of which is to be respectful to our teachers. (Amīn)

Reference:

Munavara (Nabbo) Gauri. (2011). Hazrat Amman Jaan[ra]: An Inspiration for us all. https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Hadrat-Amman-Jan.pdf

Reports of Local Events

Showing Gratitude to The Hidden Essential Workers

By: Areeba Ismail, Prairie Region

The COVID-19 Pandemic has proved to be a life altering event for people in all walks of life. As the world begins to adjust back to the new "normal," it is clear that this transition is not achievable without the help of many essential workers. Essential workers are described as any employee whose role is critical to preserving life, health and basic societal function. These include the phenomenal first responders and health care workers who have been in the eye of the storm and stepping up to treat those infected.

However, essential workers are not all on the frontlines. In fact, many of the jobs considered to be essential are behind the scenes and are discreet, often being ignored or looked over. An example of a basic societal function is garbage collection, and during COVID-19, this job was more essential than ever. While preventative measures have been placed, this job continues to remain increasingly dangerous for many workers. As residential trash collections are unpredictable, garbage collectors and sanitation workers are at a higher risk of being exposed to the virus. In addition, the volume of trash has significantly increased during the outbreak due to many homeowners doing renovations and seasonal cleaning.

In times like this, it is important to remember workers like these as we navigate through these trying times. For this reason, Lajna and Nāsirāt all over Prairie region have been leaving notes of gratitude for garbage and waste collectors. This is one of the smaller yet significant ways we can show our appreciation for all who continue to serve us while risking their well-being. Other ways to help these workers is by keeping up to date with garbage collection schedules and maintaining social distancing in their presence.

In the fight against COVID-19, it is incredibly important to remember all essential workers and recognize their efforts. If anything, their services are more essential to the public now than ever before.

Airdrie Khidmat Khalaq Efforts During Ramadān

By: Sairah Khan, Secretary Khidmat Khalaq Airdrie

Alhamdulillāh! Airdrie Alberta Jamā'at was given the opportunity to serve and provide for their community during Ramadān.

By the grace of Allāh, Lajna Airdrie raised and donated $1000 to Airdrie Food bank, this was successfully reported and the Jamā'at was introduced to the local community by two of Airdrie newspapers.

Also, 100 boxed meals were served twice to Alpha House Homeless shelter.

On the occasion of 'Idul Fitr, Lajna Airdrie delivered 'Id gifts to the Children's Cottage (a centre that offer crisis care, respite and family support services to families and their children). The gifts consisted of approximately 100 new clothes and 50 new toys for children of all ages.

During Ramadān, Lajna members provided Iftari to their neighbours and friends. On the occasion of 'Idul Fitr, 26 gift bags were made for Nāsirāt Airdrie which was delivered personally by Lajna President Airdrie.

Alhamdollilah, through the efforts of Khidmat Khalaq we were able to introduce our Jamaa't teaching to many people.

Mother-Daughter Workshop

Vancouver Surrey Central Majlis

By the grace of Allāh Almighty, Lajna Ima'illah Vancouver Surrey Central organized a special Mother-Daughter Workshop on June 18, 2021 with an attendance of 70 Lajna and 10 Nāsirāt. This workshop was held in an effort to implement the second Shura proposal, "Recognizing the Power of Mother's in Shaping our Future Generation". The program began with the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān, and included interactive discussions, emphasizing the relationship between mothers and their daughters.

This workshop was divided into three main components. The first segment began with a scenario discussion in which mothers shared their valuable experiences and stories in accordance with one of three topics: how to instill the habit of Salāt, the observance of Pardah, and the importance of connecting children with Nizam-e-Jamā'at and Khilāfat.

In the second component of the workshop, daughters were able to share their own perspectives on how we can maintain Islāmic values in today's western society. Through a series of interviews, several high school and university students shared their thoughts on how to embrace Islāmic teachings with a focus on the need to strengthen our connection with Allāh Almighty. In order to motivate and educate the members, students also shared how they dealt with specific situations that went against Islāmic teachings, but were part of academic requirements such as dance in physical education courses.

The final presentation offered insight on how mothers and daughters can adapt a healthier lifestyle during the Summer months such as, going for daily walks together and gardening. Step-by-step recipes for fresh summer drinks and healthy meals were also shared along with their health benefits.

The workshop came to an end with the concluding remarks delivered by Respected Regional Sadr Sarah Laeeq Sāhiba and the silent prayer. May Allāh the

Almighty continue to bless our future generations, and enable them to remain on the path of righteousness, Amīn!

Report Jalsa Masīh Mau'udas, Cloverdale/ Langley, B.C. Region

By: Rashda Munawar, Secretary Isha'at

By the grace of Allāh, Cloverdale/Langley halqa organized Jalsa Masīh Mau'udas on March 19, 2021 via Zoom. Both Lajna and Nāsirāt actively participated in the program.

After the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān and Hadīth, various articles were read related to the importance of the day of March 23rd in the History of Ahmadiya Khilāfat. Articles were presented in both Urdu and English languages. A beautiful poem was recited by Labiba Tahir from Durre Sameen. Beautiful speeches by various members about the love of Hazrat Masīh Mau'udas for his Creator, children and family life were presented

Secretary Nāsirāt organized a quiz in Kahoot for Nāsirāt, which was enjoyed by all. A quiz was also organized on the "Conditions of Bai'at" to keep audience engaged and Lajna's knowledge was judged by a poll.

At the end, respected President of the Halqa addressed the Lajna and Nāsirāt and shed some light related to the topic. Program ended with a silent prayer. Overall with the blessing of Allāh it was a successful event.

Report—Self Reformation Seminar (Western Ontario)

By: Natasha Rahman

By the grace of Allāh, Windsor Jamā'at held a "Self-Reformation" seminar on July 11, 2021 which included presentations and poems. The program began with recitation of the Holy Qur'ān. The presentations were on the following topics:

Importance and Blessings of Worship

Holy Qur'ān—The Ultimate Guide

Blessings of Jamā'at

The fourth and last presentation was on self-reflection conducted by Department of UmoorTalibaat which was presented by Rida Hashmat, Maryam Sami, Sarah Bajwa, and Sameen Haider. The presenters asked members to reflect over four questions: modest dress, purdah, rights of Allāh, and rights of mankind. Nāsirāt and Lajna students shared their personal experiences and reflections on the questions asked.

Sidra Tahir Sāhiba presented on the topic of "Holy Qur'ān—The Ultimate Guide", and discussed benefits of recitation, commandments of Allāh, and stories of the Prophets.

Bushra Zeeshan Sāhiba presented, "What is Ibādat/ Worship According to the Holy Qur'ān", covering references from the Holy Qur'ān, hadith, and different types of worship.

Farah Khan Sāhiba presented on "Blessings of Jamā'at" and mentioned that Jamā'at is a divine organization providing the rope of Allāh for us to hold on to, and by being obedient to Jamā'at/Khilāfat we gain blessings.

The event was attended by Regional President Sāhiba and National Tarbiyat and Ta'līm secretaries. The concluding remarks were given by National Tarbiyat Secretary who commented that she was happy to hear many of the youth were involved in the program.

The program was concluded with silent prayer.

Poetry by Lajna

Canada!!

Land of love
Land of peace
Land of harmony
And yet
best in humanity
A land that embraced us
With warmth and care
Like a mother she shared
Everything
In a solemn brotherhood
We all stood
Can we ever thank her
This favor?
Never!!
but with gratitude
love and prayer
Long live Canada
This slogan should
Fill the air

By: Anisa Tahira Masood, Brampton Heartlake

Love Canada

We love Canada through all it's thick and thin,
But we want it to shine even more from within,
We have gone through a lot,
But we stand by it in one spot.
We may be different yet the same,
But we care and share all the same,
We cry and laugh together without a sigh,
But sometimes we don't even know why.
We know we are special to all,
But together we make sure we all stand tall.
We are proud of where it has come to,
But we crave for more and better too.
We know you'll get there soon,
But we'll wait till you get to the moon!

By: Alia Shah , Brampton Caledon

Canada is Our Country

Canada is our country
and we're proud to call it "Home".
North, East, South, and West
for it we wrote this poem

This great country —
lets everyone live free,
with voting rights and freedom of speech
you'll live peacefully, that's a guarantee

Canada's people are diverse —
a balance to make us strong.
Variety is the spice of life
and our list of cultures is long.

From far and wide we all take pride
in the country we all love —
Her rivers, lakes, forests, plains,
and mountains high above.

Writing you a few words
the good old-fashioned way;
On July 1st, Our Canada -
H A P P Y B I R T H D A Y ! !

By: Saria & Labeena Rafique, Brampton, Flowertown

Nāsirāt Corner

Canada and Me

Saba Mian, Calgary NW

Before I can talk about why one should love one's nation, the most important reason is that this is what Allāh the Almighty and my faith command me to do. The Holy Prophet Muhammud[sa] has said, "Love of one's country is a part of faith". So, in order to call ourselves true believers, we must remember to love our great nation: **CANADA.**

Canada is well known across the world for being a leader in its equality among people. As Ahmadi Muslims, most of our home countries have prevented us from practicing our faith and stripped us from the right to call ourselves Muslims. Oppression in places like Pakistan, Indonesia and the Middle East make progressing in society near impossible for us. However, in Canada, we are given the freedom to practice our beautiful faith: Islām Ahmadiyyat. According to the Government of Canada's Guide to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, "Under section 2 of the Charter, Canadians are free to follow the religion of their choice. In addition, they are guaranteed freedom of thought, belief and expression". By the grace of Allāh, along with practising the teachings of our faith, the Jamā'at continues to establish relations with Canadian figures in the municipal, legislative and parliamentary positions.

Growing up, my parents had always emphasized their love for Canada to me as well. I grew up in a rural community of Alberta which was near Cold Lake. Just fifteen minutes North of my acreage was the Frog Lake Indigenous Reserve. We always kept friendly and respectful relations with our Indigenous community members. Over time, we shared traditional recipes with each other. In fact, we have developed such a good friendship with many Indigenous families that they drive 600 km to my father's business. I can still recall learning the classic song "This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land" in elementary school. In the second grade, we had a boat and buoyancy project. The boat I created was out of a Canada Dry soda bottle, with a hand-drawn Canadian flag pasted on it that my parents helped me make. By doing these simple, little acts, I have always had a sense of love for my nation since the beginning.

THIS IS CANADA!